

(c) Agriculture, aquaculture or production of other natural, processed or manufactured products which enter commerce;

(d) Scenic, historic, archeologic, esthetic, fish, wildlife, plants or cultural interests.

Surface coal mining operations which exist on the date of enactment means all surface coal mining operations which were being conducted on August 3, 1977.

Surface operations and impacts incident to an underground coal mine means all activities involved in or related to underground coal mining which are either conducted on the surface of the land, produce changes in the land surface or disturb the surface, air or water resources of the area, including all activities listed in section 701(28) of the Act and the definition of surface coal mining operations appearing in § 700.5 of this chapter.

Valid existing rights means:

(a) Except for haul roads, that a person possesses valid existing rights for an area protected under section 522(e) of the Act on August 3, 1977, if the application of any of the prohibitions contained in that section to the property interest that existed on that date would effect a taking of the person's property which would entitle the person to just compensation under the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution;

(b) For haul roads,

(1) A recorded right of way, recorded easement or a permit for a coal haul road recorded as of August 3, 1977, or

(2) Any other road in existence as of August 3, 1977;

(c) A person possesses valid existing rights if the person proposing to conduct surface coal mining operations can demonstrate that the coal is both needed for, and immediately adjacent to, an ongoing surface coal mining operation which existed on August 3, 1977. A determination that coal is "needed for" will be based upon a finding that the extension of mining is essential to make the surface coal mining operation as a whole economically viable;

(d) Where an area comes under the protection of section 522(e) of the Act after August 3, 1977, valid existing rights shall be found if—

(1) On the date the protection comes into existence, a validly authorized surface coal mining operation exists on that area; or

(2) The prohibition caused by section 522(e) of the Act, if applied to the property interest that exists on the date the protection comes into existence, would effect a taking of the person's property which would entitle the person to just compensation under the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution.

(e) Interpretation of the terms of the document relied upon to establish the rights to which the standard of paragraphs (a) and (d) of this section applies shall be based either upon applicable State statutory or case law concerning interpretation of documents conveying mineral rights or, where no applicable State law exists, upon the usage and custom at the time and place it came into existence.

[48 FR 41348, Sept. 14, 1983, as amended at 52 FR 4261, Feb. 10, 1987; 56 FR 65634, Dec. 17, 1991]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 51 FR 41960, Nov. 20, 1986 in § 761.5:

1. The definition of *Significant recreational, timber, economic, or other values incompatible with surface coal mining operations* was suspended insofar as the listed values are evaluated for compatibility solely in terms of reclaimability; and

2. Paragraphs (a) and (c) of the definition of *Valid existing rights* were suspended, and subparagraph (d)(2) was suspended insofar as it incorporates the takings test of paragraph (a).

§ 761.11 Areas where mining is prohibited or limited.

Subject to valid existing rights, no surface coal mining operations shall be conducted after August 3, 1977, unless those operations existed on the date of enactment:

(a) On any lands within the boundaries of the National Park System, the National Wildlife Refuge System, the National System of Trails, the National Wilderness Preservation System, the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, including study rivers designated under section 5(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1276(a)) or study rivers or study river corridors as established in any guidelines pursuant

to that Act, and National Recreation Areas designated by Act of Congress.

(b) On any Federal lands within the boundaries of any national forest; *Provided, however*, That surface coal mining operations may be permitted on such lands, if the Secretary finds that there are no significant recreational, timber, economic, or other values which may be incompatible with surface coal mining operations; and

(1) Surface operations and impacts are incident to an underground coal mine; or

(2) The Secretary of Agriculture determines, with respect to lands which do not have significant forest cover within those national forests west of the 100th meridian, that surface coal mining operations comply with the Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960 (16 U.S.C. 528-531), the Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act of 1975 (Pub. L. 94-377, 30 U.S.C. 201 *et seq.*), the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (90 Stat. 2949), and the provisions of the Act. No surface coal mining operation may be permitted within the boundaries of the Custer National Forest;

(c) On any lands where mining will adversely affect any publicly owned park or any places included in the National Register of Historic Places, unless jointly approved by the regulatory authority and the Federal, State, or local agency with jurisdiction over the park or place;

(d) Within 100 feet, measured horizontally, of the outside right-of-way line of any public road, except—

(1) Where mine access roads or haulage roads join such right-of-way line; or

(2) Where the regulatory authority or the appropriate public road authority, pursuant to being designated as the responsible agency by the regulatory authority, allows the public road to be relocated, closed, or the area affected to be within 100 feet of such road, after—

(i) Public notice and opportunity for a public hearing in accordance with § 761.12(d); and

(ii) Making a written finding that the interests of the affected public and landowners will be protected;

(e) Within 300 feet, measured horizontally, of any occupied dwelling, except when—

(1) The owner thereof has provided a written waiver consenting to surface coal mining operations closer than 300 feet; or

(2) The part of the mining operation which is within 300 feet of the dwelling is a haul road or access road which connects with an existing public road on the side of the public road opposite the dwelling;

(f) Within 300 feet measured horizontally of any public building, school, church, community or institutional building or public park; or

(g) Within 100 feet, measured horizontally, of a cemetery; cemeteries may be relocated if authorized by applicable State law or regulations.

(h) There will be no surface coal mining, permitting, licensing or exploration of Federal lands in the National Park System, National Wildlife Refuge System, National System of Trails, National Wilderness Preservation System, Wild and Scenic Rivers System, or National Recreation Areas, unless called for by Acts of Congress.

[48 FR 41348, Sept. 14, 1983, as amended at 51 FR 25819, July 16, 1986; 51 FR 26385, July 23, 1986; 52 FR 4261, Feb. 10, 1987]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 51 FR 41961, Nov. 20, 1986, paragraph (h) of § 761.11 was suspended.

§ 761.12 Procedures.

(a) Upon receipt of a complete application for a surface coal mining and reclamation operation permit, the regulatory authority shall review the application to determine whether surface coal mining operations are limited or prohibited under § 761.11 on the lands which would be disturbed by the proposed operations.

(b)(1) Where the proposed operation would be located on any lands listed in § 761.11 (a), (f), or (g), the regulatory authority shall reject the application if the applicant has no valid existing rights for the area, or if the operation did not exist on August 3, 1977.

(2) If the regulatory authority is unable to determine whether the proposed operation is located within the boundaries of any of the lands in § 761.11(a) or closer than the limits provided in § 761.11 (f) and (g), the regulatory authority shall transmit a copy of the